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6. Microbiology

Posters

**[69] Rapid induction of high level azithromycin resistance in clinical CF isolates**

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**Objectives:** The use of chronic azithromycin treatment has been linked with increased macrolide resistance amongst respiratory pathogens. The aim of this study was to determine if *in vitro* exposure to azithromycin induces resistance among *Streptococcus* and *Rothia* isolates from CF sputum. We also determined the stability of any resistance induced.

**Methods:** Development of resistance after serial exposure was investigated by passaging *Streptococcus* (n=6) and *Rothia* (n=6) isolates in sub-MIC concentrations of azithromycin for 12 passages, with MICs determined after every passage. The susceptibility of these isolates to a range of antibiotics was also determined before and after serial azithromycin exposure.

**Results:** High level resistance (MIC >256 µg/ml) developed within 8 passages for 3/6 *Streptococcus* isolates and within 4 passages for 3/6 *Rothia* isolates. Resistance remained stable for these isolates following subculture in drug-free broth. The MIC of the remaining *Streptococcus* and *Rothia* isolates also increased but not to levels above the resistance breakpoints. Furthermore, 2/6 *Rothia* isolates developed resistance to clindamycin following serial exposure to azithromycin.

Table: MIC ranges following azithromycin exposure

	MIC range (µg/ml)			
	Passage 0	Passage 4	Passage 8	Passage 12
<i>Streptococcus</i>	0.064–6	1.5–>256	2–>256	4–>256
<i>Rothia</i>	0.023–0.125	0.064–>256	1–>256	1.5–>256

**Conclusion:** Exposure of clinical *Streptococcus* and *Rothia* isolates to azithromycin can rapidly induce high level resistance, which appears to be stable.

Work supported by Wellcome Trust (CMcG) and Queen's University Belfast (CK) Vacation Scholarships.

**[70] Expression of RND-type efflux pumps as a mechanism of antibiotic resistance in clinical *Prevotella* isolates**

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**Objectives:** We have previously shown that CF associated *Prevotella* spp. are resistant to antibiotics from multiple classes. It has also been demonstrated that *Prevotella* possess either one or two species-specific RND-type efflux pumps. The aims of this study were to determine if (1) efflux pumps are expressed by *Prevotella* isolates and (2) expression of these pumps contributes to antibiotic resistance.

**Methods:** Transcription levels of the species-specific efflux pumps were analysed in 31 clinical *Prevotella* isolates and *Prevotella melaninogenica* ATCC 25845 by quantitative real time PCR (qRT-PCR). Minimum inhibitory concentrations (MICs) of ceftazidime (n=12 isolates), co-amoxiclav (n=16 isolates) and tetracycline (n=22 isolates) were then determined by Etest<sup>®</sup> in the presence or absence of the efflux pump inhibitor (EPI), Phe-Arg β-naphthylamide 2HCl. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was used to compare MICs before and after inhibition of efflux pumps.

**Results:** Twenty-six of 31 (84%) *Prevotella* isolates and the type strain expressed the expected RND-type efflux pumps. For the remaining 5 isolates, either no expression was detected (n=3) or 1/2 expected pumps were expressed (n=2). A small but statistically significant decrease in MICs for co-amoxiclav (P=0.011, Wilcoxon Signed Rank) and tetracycline (P<0.001) was detected in the presence of the EPI.

**Conclusion:** Most *Prevotella* isolates express RND-type efflux pumps, which may contribute to co-amoxiclav and tetracycline resistance.

This work is supported by HSC Research and Development, Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland and by the Medical Research Council through a US–Ireland Partnership Grant.

**[71] Extended-spectrum β-lactamase (ESβL) production: a mechanism of resistance to ceftazidime in *Prevotella* species isolated from patients with CF**

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**Objectives:** ESβL producing bacteria inactivate ceftazidime, which is used in the treatment of CF lung infection. Ceftazidime resistance is common among CF *Prevotella* isolates. The aims of this study were to determine and compare (1) *in vitro* antimicrobial susceptibility to ceftazidime and (2) ESβL production by *Prevotella* isolates from a range of sources.

**Methods:** Isolates of *Prevotella* (CF, n=34; non-CF infections, n=25; healthy control, n=17) were tested for susceptibility to ceftazidime by Etest<sup>®</sup> and for ESβL production using the combined disc method. A chi-square test was used to determine if there was an association between ESβL production and *Prevotella* group. Isolates were split into ESβL positive/negative and MICs compared using the Mann-Whitney test.

**Results:** Ceftazidime (CF and non-CF, MIC<sub>90</sub> >256 µg/ml; healthy controls, MIC<sub>90</sub> 128 µg/ml) resistance was similar between groups. Twenty-five of 34 (77%) CF, 15/25 (60%) non-CF and 11/17 (65%) healthy control isolates were ESβL positive. No association between ESβL production and *Prevotella* group was detected ( $\chi^2 = 1.252$ , P=0.571). ESβL positive isolates had greater MICs against ceftazidime (P<0.001, Mann-Whitney test) compared to ESβL negative isolates.

**Conclusion:** ESβL production was common amongst *Prevotella* and was associated with reduced susceptibility to ceftazidime. CF *Prevotella* producing ESβLs may potentially contribute to treatment failure of CF pulmonary infection with ceftazidime.

Work supported by DEL NI and by HSC Research and Development, Public Health Agency, NI and the MRC through a US–Ireland Partnership Grant. The non-CF isolates were provided by Dr Hall, Anaerobe Reference Unit, Public Health Wales.

**[72] Inhalatory antibiotic therapy in cystic fibrosis and emergence of colistin resistant Gram-negative non-fermenting bacteria: a new problem in pulmonary infection treatment?**

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**Objectives:** The pulmonary infection in Cystic Fibrosis (CF) patients is characterised by different Gram-negative non fermenting (GNnF) bacteria equipped with intrinsic resistances to antibiotics that make more difficult to treat this infection. Colistin has emerged as a relevant therapeutic option for the treatment of GNnF. Aerosol therapy has become increasingly important in the treatment of CF lung disease. Nevertheless some studies report the emergence of new colistin-resistant (COL-R) pathogens in CF. The aim of this study is to analyse the emergence of COL-R GNnF bacteria in CF patients attending an Italian CF center.

**Methods:** During 2010–2012 were analysed 1865 strains of GNnF isolated from Genoa CF patients.

The susceptibility to antibiotics was tested by Disk-diffusion and confirmed by E-test. The results were also correlated with clinical data of CF patients.

**Results:** The number of GNnF is increased from 30 to 58. The main of GNnF recovered are: *A. xylosoxidans*, *S. maltophilia* and *P. aeruginosa*. All GNnF strains colistin resistant are multi-drug resistant, except some isolates of *S. maltophilia*. The clinical data showed that the 65% of patients colonised by GNnF were treated with cycles of nebulised colistin and alternated with nebulised tobramycin.

**Conclusions:** The emergence of COL-R GNnF strains in CF patients treated with nebulised colistin suggest that this therapeutic option can select COL-R strains and can favour the arising of other resistance to antibiotics. Then the isolation of these GNnF bacteria present a real challenge to diagnostic laboratories, as they are difficult to identify and often misidentified as belonging to the *B. cepacia* complex.